

Commissioners-

The GMRS service is probably the last remaining the last remaining service available to families for distance communications via radio and should be left as is.

As a youth I licensed into the CB service and enjoyed that service. When licenses no longer were needed it became abused with foul language and overcrowding. That hasn't changed. Years later I received and still hold my amateur radio license.

Five years ago I licensed in GMRS to help our church organization establish an emergency/disaster communications system with multiple radios and 2 repeaters. Our area in northern Los Angeles County is full of winding valleys and canyons that render the FRS and MURS service almost useless. FRS was tested in the canyons and was found to be good for a few blocks. Ok for a neighborhood but ineffective for a community system. We turned to the GMRS service as the alternative. I was asked to find a way to communicate that didn't have the studying and testing required in the amateur service. GMRS was the answer. We use the FRS service for very short range communications.

Every month we test the system to make sure that it is functioning properly and that all involved have practice operating their radios. Twice a year we run a drill where every home of our 4000 area members is visited and a message sent back to the leadership. This process we use has been in place for many years and adding the radio system to it has added quicker reporting capabilities. Our system uses frs radios in neighborhoods to report to GMRS licensees who then report via repeater to the church leadership. Just after we put the system in place a major fire came roaring through our city knocking out power and phone lines. We could communicate with our block captains, area captains and finally our leadership to report the welfare of our membership. Recently a Canyon HOA asked if they could also use our repeater system. Their Firesafe Council Licensed members now use our system to check on the welfare of the 900 residents in their canyon area

Changing this service would render great harm to our disaster communications system. We still use ham radio as a long and short range solution, but by licensing families into the GMRS system we were able to get more people involved. Plus the greater power offered in the GMRS service gives greater distance for simplex operation as well as extending the distance using repeaters. Cutting the available power in this service just creates another FRS and MURS type service. Citizens deserve the extra output option.

Adding bubble pack dual service radios to the market created a great injustice to those who have properly licensed in the GMRS service. Kids and schools in our area use the GMRS channels for fun and communications. The FRS channels would serve them just fine but now they interrupt communications in the licensed portion. Many people buy those radios and just disregard the fine print about getting licensed. Licensing helps eliminate the chaos that ensues in the radio service that governs itself, Just look at the CB service as I have mentioned before.

Extending the license term to ten years would give the licensee more value for the

dollars spent. I believe that to be a great idea. I also believe, if this is adopted, that licenses that were recently purchased be extended to the full ten years. With a longer available license term I think you find that more people would be willing to license up. A longer term in this economy would be helpful to the family budget.

When making this decision please consider all of the organizations that use GMRS for their communications, especially in times of disaster. It is a voice service for those who want communications not toys. Having to move to the industrial service is both costly and doesn't offer the freedoms that families and organizations have in the GMRS service. Radios that can be used across the nation, and repeaters available for use with owner permission across the country. The standard LMR service doesn't offer this option.

Lastly, more spectrum is needed for GMRS. Eventually narrow band could be added to increase the available spectrum. Most of us use surplus radios from other services. It keeps the cost down. Transitioning to narrow band would cause many people to have to upgrade to newer equipment. This becomes a great burden on the family budget. Perhaps five to ten years down the line it may become feasible to purchase narrow band equipment at better rates. So a quick transition to narrow band would also hurt the GMRS service that is designed for family use.

The GMRS service is a great asset. Please use great care when making changes to it.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,  
Craig Rosevear  
KD6NOH/WQDW297